



Public Notice

**U.S. Army Corps
Of Engineers
Galveston District**

Permit Application No: 23050
Date Issued: 22 May 2003
Comments Due: 23 June 2003

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, GALVESTON DISTRICT
AND
TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

PURPOSE OF PUBLIC NOTICE: To inform you of a proposal for work in which you might be interested. It is also to solicit your comments and information to better enable us to make a reasonable decision on factors affecting the public interest. We hope you will participate in this process.

AUTHORITY: This application will be reviewed pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

APPLICANT: United States Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 278
Anahuac, Texas 77514-0278

AGENT: Weston Solutions, Inc.
5599 San Felipe, Suite 700
Houston, Texas 77056-2721
Telephone: 713-985-6703
POC: Mandy Loeffler

LOCATION: The project is located along an approximate 5-mile stretch of shoreline, in East Bay, just offshore of the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, beginning at the mouth of Oyster Bayou, and continuing west to Robinson's Bayou, in Chambers County, Texas. The project can be located on the U.S.G.S. quadrangle maps entitled: Frozen Point and High Island, Texas. Approximate UTM Coordinates: Zone: 15; (from east to west) Easternmost Segment (Begin Point) Easting: 357184; Northing: 3270565; (End Point) Easting: 356275; Northing: 3270062. Central Segment (Begin Point) Easting: 354918; Northing: 3269041; (End Point) Easting: 353902; Northing: 3268904. Western Segment (Begin Point) Easting: 352429; Northing: 3268594; (End Point) Easting: 347964; Northing: 3272302.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project consists of the construction of three separate breakwater segments. The first two segments are continuous concrete rubble breakwaters measuring 6,075 feet long and 3,510 feet long, respectively. These continuous breakwaters will involve the discharge of approximately 8,284 cubic yards of concrete rubble. The breakwater structures will be rebar-free with the crest built to +0.9 feet North American Vertical Datum. The crest width of the breakwater will measure 3 feet wide and will be constructed with a side slope configuration of 1:2.

The construction of the continuous breakwater segments will require the dredging of an access channel. The construction access channel will be dredged from the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) to the mouth of Oyster Bayou where it will turn west, to parallel the shoreline. The longest segment will require the excavation of approximately 70,000 cubic yards of material that will be re-deposited following construction, between the shoreline and the breakwater. The shorter segment will require excavation of an additional 25,000 cubic yards of material to construct the access channel. The material resulting from the initial dredging effort, originating at the GIWW, will be sidecast during construction, and re-deposited from the channel from which it was excavated upon project completion. Water depth at the site of the proposed breakwaters ranges in depth from -1.5 to -1.7 feet. No submerged aquatic vegetation will be impacted as a result of the proposed activity.

A third, non-contiguous breakwater structure will be constructed from Frozen Point, northwest, to the mouth of Robinsons Bayou, a distance of approximately 18,000 linear feet. This segment will be placed along the shoreline in areas that have experienced severe erosion. The non-continuous segment will be placed an average of 20 feet from the shoreline and will require the discharge of 9,500 cubic yards of concrete rubble. The structure will be constructed to a height of 30 inches above grade and will measure 48 inches wide. For this segment of shoreline protection, the applicant will plant smooth cordgrass between the shoreline and the breakwater. Access to this site will be via an existing road that runs parallel to the shoreline. An access channel will not be constructed for this breakwater segment.

The overall effort is designed to reduce shoreline erosion and retreat along the northern shoreline of East Bay. Currently, erosion is threatening vegetative communities and habitats located landward of the shoreline. The applicant's plans are enclosed in 3 sheets.

NOTES: This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This information has not been verified.

A preliminary review of this application indicates that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required. Since permit assessment is a continuing process, this preliminary determination of EIS requirement will be changed if data or information brought forth in the coordination process is of a significant nature.

Our evaluation will also follow the guidelines published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 404 (b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

OTHER AGENCY AUTHORIZATIONS: Texas Coastal Zone consistency certification is required. The applicant has stated that the project is consistent with the Texas Coastal Management Program goals and policies and will be conducted in a manner consistent with said Program.

STATE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: This project would result in a direct impact of greater than three acres of waters of the state or 1500 linear feet of streams (or a combination of the two is above the threshold), and as such would not fulfill Tier I criteria for the project. Therefore, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) certification is required. Concurrent with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) processing of this application, the TCEQ is reviewing this application under Section 401 of the CWA and in accordance with Title 30, Texas Administrative Code Section 279.1-13 to determine if the work would comply with State water quality standards. By virtue of an agreement between the Corps and the TCEQ, this public notice is also issued for the purpose of advising all known interested persons that there is pending before the TCEQ a decision on water quality certification under such act. Any comments concerning this application may be submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, 401 Coordinator, MSC-150, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. The public comment period extends 30 days from the date of publication of this notice. A copy of the public notice with a description of work is made available for review in the TCEQ's Austin office. The complete application may be reviewed in the Corps office. The TCEQ may conduct a public hearing to consider all comments concerning water quality if requested in writing. A request for a public hearing must contain the following information: the name, mailing address, application number, or other recognizable reference to the application; a brief description of the interest of the requester, or of persons represented by the requester; and a brief description of how the application, if granted, would adversely affect such interest.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: The staff archaeologist has reviewed the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places, lists of properties determined eligible, and other sources of information. The following is current knowledge of the presence or absence of historic properties and the effects of the undertaking upon these properties:

There are no previously recorded historic properties located within the proposed project areas. In addition, the proposed construction will occur just offshore, and, therefore, little likelihood exists for the activity to affect cultural resources in the area, even if present within the affected area.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES: Preliminary indications are that no known threatened and/or endangered species or their critical habitat will be affected by the proposed work.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial adverse impact on Essential Fish Habitat or Federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

PUBLIC INTEREST REVIEW FACTORS: This application will be reviewed in accordance with 33 CFR 320-330, the Regulatory Programs of the Corps of Engineers, and other pertinent laws, regulations and executive orders. The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal, will be considered: among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

SOLICITATION OF COMMENTS: The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public, Federal, State, and local agencies and officials, Indian tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

This public notice is being distributed to all known interested persons in order to assist in developing facts upon which a decision by the Corps of Engineers may be based. For accuracy and completeness of the record, all data in support of or in opposition to the proposed work should be submitted in writing setting forth sufficient detail to furnish a clear understanding of the reasons for support or opposition.

PUBLIC HEARING: Prior to the close of the comment period any person may make a written request for a public hearing setting forth the particular reasons for the request. The District Engineer will determine whether the issues are substantial and should be considered in the permit decision. If a public hearing is warranted, all known interested persons will be notified of the time, date, and location.

CLOSE OF COMMENT PERIOD: All comments pertaining to this Public Notice must reach this office on or before **23 June 2003**. Extensions of the comment period may be granted for valid reasons provided a written request is received by the limiting date. **If no comments are received by that date, it will be considered that there are no objections**. Comments and requests for additional information should be submitted to:

Kimberly McLaughlin
Regulatory Branch, CESWG-PE-RE
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 1229
Galveston, Texas 77553-1229
409-766-3936 Phone
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DISTRICT ENGINEER
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